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DAN SMOOT

The Candidates And Foreign Policy

Concerning Vietnam, Hubert Humphrey says:

"The objective of your government has been a political settlement . . . a negotiated settlement . . . . I have never felt that Vietnam was subject to a military solution."

In other words, Humphrey supports the Johnson position of waging a "limited" war, giving the communists protected sanctuaries, restraining our men from using their best tactics and weapons against strategic targets, scorning victory as an objective, deliberately avoiding decisive military steps that could have won the war long ago.

Nixon takes the same position. On a National Educational Television program, November 20, 1967, Nixon said:

"I oppose the invasion of North Vietnam. I oppose nuclear weapons. I oppose the declaration of war against North Vietnam. Our goal is solely . . . the same as we had in Korea."

In their official platforms, Humphrey and Nixon take equally meaningless stands on Vietnam—though, oddly enough, Humphrey's platform seems to take a harder line against the communists than Nixon's does.

Since the platforms were written, Humphrey has tried to outflank Nixon on the left. Proclaiming himself the "peace candidate" and falsely accusing Nixon of dangerous sabre-rattling, Humphrey has said he would have had no difficulty in accepting the Vietnam-war plank that Senator Eugene McCarthy wanted in the Democrat platform. McCarthy's Vietnam-war plank meant immediate surrender to the communists.

Trying to capitalize on Humphrey's switch to a pro-communist stand, the Republican vice-presidential candidate, Spiro T. Agnew, accurately accused Humphrey of being soft on communism. Nixon's leading congressional supporters (House minority leader Gerald Ford, and Senate minority leader

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Everett Dirksen) hastily called a press conference to rebuke Agnew. Nixon himself repudiated his running mate's charge against Humphrey.

All of this leaves the voting public with nothing to choose between except personalities. Both Humphrey and Nixon promise to negotiate an honorable settlement in Vietnam, but neither indicates how he would do it.

Earlier this year, George Wallace, taking a very firm stand on Vietnam, was saying:

"Our servicemen are there, and we must stand behind them 100 percent.

"I believe the Vietnam war can be settled in a military fashion by the military, and I would hope that we would escalate the bombings of supply routes and of harbor facilities of North Vietnam to stop the flow of supplies from China and Russia into North Vietnam. There should be no sanctuary in North Vietnam.

"We have got to win this war. If that means stepping up the bombing, step it up. If it means blocking off Haiphong, block her off. But there's no sense talking peace with that crowd until you've got them whipped. And I wouldn't put any of those Viet Cong in a new government either. I don't think the Viet Cong and the National Liberation Front ought to be given any part in negotiations, for the simple reason that they're not a part of a lawfully constituted government. They're communists, and if you deal with them you can't believe anything they say.

"A lot of fine people who love this country feel we should not be in Vietnam, because it is a drain on our military and economic strength and because it is disastrous for us to get bogged down in a land war in Asia. But we are in Vietnam; and, since we are there, we should fight the war with all the military might we have, including full use of air and naval power."

Since the Paris peace talks began, Wallace has modified his stand on Vietnam. He now says he prays the Paris talks will produce an honorable peace by the time he becomes President. If they do not, he will consult the Joint Chiefs of Staff. If the military has a plan for a military victory with conventional weapons, he will adopt it.

All three candidates acknowledge that our country is involved in a horrible mess in Vietnam.

Nixon says the mess resulted from Johnson's ineffective use of America's gigantic "military, economic, diplomatic power" against the inferior resources of North Vietnam; but the public has no inkling of how Nixon would have used American power effectively, because Nixon has supported Johnson's Vietnam policy more consistently than most of the congressional leaders of Johnson's own party. Humphrey babbles vague insinuations that things will be better when he is "captain of the team" which he has been merely a member of as Vice President.

Thus, Nixon and Humphrey support the policy that got us into Vietnam, but promise that *their* handling of the policy will somehow get us out honorably.

Wallace castigates the policy. Rebuking Democrats and Republicans for saying he knows nothing about foreign policy, Wallace says:

"What has their expert knowledge of foreign policy accomplished? It has just about bankrupt this country for aid to nations that help our enemy when we are in trouble. It has dragged us into wars that they are afraid to win and don't know how to stop."

Wallace has not yet outlined *his* foreign policy. Nixon and Humphrey, on the other hand, have emphatically vowed to continue the internationalist foreign policy which was initiated by Franklin D. Roosevelt (when he committed this nation to help the communists win World War II in Europe).

The policy of injecting America into the wars and other affairs of all nations, for the purpose of creating a one-world society because American political leaders fear that "America can no longer stand alone" — this *policy* (and not the many errors that Presidents have made in administering the policy) involved us in World War II and then gave the fruits of victory in that war to the communist empire which our help had saved; it

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has involved us in two bloody, no-win wars since World War II; it has depleted our material resources and manpower for the benefit of other countries, to the point of jeopardizing our own security; it has made us a hated nation; it has corrupted the institutions and political principles which made us a great power.

No major presidential candidate in a generation has promised or even suggested total abandonment of the foreign policy which has brought our nation to the very precipice of disaster.

Yet, for our own survival, that policy must be abandoned. For our own survival, we must return to the traditional policy of national independence and benign neutrality which George Washington urged in his Farewell Address, and which our nation followed for 148 years: 1789 to 1917; 1920 to 1940.

Washington did not want America to build a wall around herself. His policy permitted freer exchange of travel, trade, ideas, and culture between Americans and foreigners than has been possible since the policy was abandoned. The Father of our Country wanted the American *government* kept out of the wars, revolutions, and political turmoil of other nations.

The foreign policy of George Washington was temporarily abandoned on April 2, 1917, when Woodrow Wilson asked Congress for a declaration of war on Germany, to make the world safe for democracy. Wilson's airy evangelism sent thousands of men to bleed and die on foreign soil in World War I, but it did not make the world safe for anything worthwhile.

Revolted by the bloody and costly consequences of our first major venture in international meddling and uplifting, we returned to our policy of political isolationism (benign neutrality).

Franklin D. Roosevelt was elected three times on a platform of political isolationism. In 1940, however, while promising to keep the United States out of World War II, Roosevelt was working relentlessly to get us involved.

Such men as former President Herbert Hoover and Senator Robert A. Taft warned that American involvement in World War II would be a gargantuan error — implored us to stay out and let Hitler and Stalin destroy each other.

Roosevelt prevailed, and initiated the internationalist policy of world meddling, which all succeeding Presidents continued.

Truman adopted programs to implement the policy inherited from Roosevelt — multiple alliances which scattered American military power all over the earth on the presumption that America could not defend herself but could defend the world; foreign aid to all nations which would accept it (including communist countries) on the presumption that America could no longer stand alone but could carry the world on her back.

Through NATO, set up in 1949, we made a permanent multi-billion-dollar commitment to defend Europe with American men and material, while European nations grew economically strong on our aid — strong enough to extend trade and aid to our enemies in communist lands; strong enough to compete with us industrially and to capture world markets from American industries being taxed to subsidize foreign competitors.

NATO was built on France as the keystone with command headquarters in Paris; but France never made a gesture of real support for NATO. Eventually, de Gaulle ordered us to get out and move the military installations which were built, at crushing cost to American taxpayers, for the purpose of defending France and other NATO countries.

Our "defense of the free world" in Europe has worked at cross-purposes with our "defense of the free world" in Asia and Africa.

The Roosevelt, Truman, Eisenhower, Kennedy, and Johnson administrations fully supported the communist propaganda campaign against European colonialism while, at the same time, subsidizing European colonial powers. The result has been resentment of the United States in all quarters.

Our internationalist foreign policy has also failed wretchedly throughout Latin America, where animosity toward the United States is more virulent than ever before.

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Internationalists assume that because we have airplanes, missiles, mass-destruction weapons, and instantaneous worldwide communications systems, America can no longer live an independent national life. Actually, we are now in better position to live independently than we were in the early days of the Republic when, as a thinly populated, rural nation, we were heavily dependent on Europeans for manufactured goods — and when all the major powers of Europe and many of our own leading citizens were exerting intense pressures to push our nation into the endless turmoil of European politics.

America was a weak, underdeveloped nation then; but she had statesmen who maintained her national independence, kept her free of foreign entanglements.

Suggestion that America return to a policy of national independence brings objections from people who have been saturated with propaganda about our world responsibilities.

The American *government* has no world responsibility — has no constitutional authority to concern itself with the living standards or behavior of people in other lands, as long as they do not violate the rights of Americans.

One of America's alleged world responsibilities is to help underdeveloped nations build industrial systems like ours in order to raise their material living standards.

What happens to people in an underdeveloped nation after we give them complicated machinery which they themselves cannot produce or maintain — often cannot even operate? They are not ready for the complexities of a modern industrial society. We are forcing upon them a way of life which they are not yet culturally capable of accepting. We cut them loose from their customs and moorings, leaving them victims of political strongmen.

Many underdeveloped areas have a greater abundance of natural resources than America ever had. Why did we advance while others did not? Our spectacular growth was possible because our Constitution gave us freedom from our own government, and our foreign policy kept us out of the troubles of other nations.

Our political system released and gave full play to the energies and ingenuity of every individual; it attracted foreign capital by guaranteeing the inviolability of valid contracts; it nourished growth of domestic risk-capital by guaranteeing that a man was entitled to whatever rewards he could honestly earn with his own effort and money. Our growth was achieved by *private*, not *government*, effort.

Foreigners wanting to develop their own industries can get American private capital by adopting a political system to prevent their own government from confiscating or harassing foreign investments in their country. That is the way Americans originally got foreign capital to help develop industry.

One of our alleged world responsibilities is to promote world peace.

We cannot prevent other nations from fighting one another. We could, however, keep the United States out of war by maintaining impregnable *national* defense, and by returning to the traditional foreign policy of benign neutrality.

We would thus make our maximum contribution to world peace. Without American help, other nations could not afford the costly, destructive wars which they have been fighting in this century with our money.

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